

Look out!

The McGill Daily Black History Month Special Issue

Thursday February 18th

**creative pieces, articles, artwork, and
production night support are needed.
talk to verda in shatner B-03 before its
too late.**

The McGill Daily Women's Special Issue

If you're interested in submitting articles, interviews, reviews or creative pieces (poetry, personal essays, artwork, photography), come to the first Women's Special Issue Meeting today at 4:30pm in the Daily Office, Shatner B-03 to brainstorm story ideas.

100% NATURAL



MONDAY, MARCH 8

Shappy's Happy Dick

by Erin Runions (with themes and phrases from conversations with: Matt Bergbusch, Adrienne Gibb, Anna Kruzynski, and Guy)

I don't know who's happier about Dick Pound becoming the new chancellor of McGill: Shappy, the Dick himself, or the federal and provincial governments. Shappy's already leading the way in lobbying for deregulation and privatization. Now with the Dick, champion stroker that he is, pleasuring Shapiro and the governments in new and creative ways (recall that in 1996 the Dick signed a letter in conjunction with the other Québec university Board of Governors demanding that the Québec government deregulate tuition fees), and with Duncan Reid happily salivating for any bone thrown his way in this new arrangement, the

neoliberal agenda of deregulation and privatization will be better served. We can look forward to a happy Shappy, Reid, and Dick fest, going at it hard, in order to explode (disseminate?) publicly financed and accessible education.

I happen to be privy to the fact that this appointment is all really about mutual masturbation, or at best, circle jerks, because I sat, as the representative for the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS), on the committee to choose the Chancellor. I stopped going to the meetings after I became suspicious that the Dick's appointment was planned from the start. Sure a number of names were batted around, discussed, ranked; sure several people were

approached (of course many of them too busy, or intimates of the principal, probably primed in advance to say no); but at the end of the day, surprise, surprise, Shapiro's right hand man was appointed.

Furthermore, it was clear that the PGSS' recommendations on the subject were to be dismissed (of course I couldn't ever get input from my constituency, because of confidentiality rules). For instance, I suggested in accordance with PGSS policy the position of Chancellor, as an upper administration position, should be an elected position, that we should therefore try to have a campus-wide election. Shapiro and the Dick tried to argue that this would contravene university policy. However, when the

committee discovered that there was no university policy whatsoever prohibiting such an electoral process, they rather sheepishly "decided" (I'm not sure how, because no real discussion was had, and no vote was taken) that an election was not an option, as it did not follow standard university practice "since time immemorial." Then when the Dick's name was first suggested (very cleverly several meetings into the process), I voiced the PGSS' strong dissent (based on the fact that he had had considerable influence in the 1997 decision to increase additional session fees for graduate students to regular tuition fee levels). Of course, my dissent was ignored.

All this goes to say that my long



held theory that you have to strap on a dick to go to McGill no longer holds, because, well, nothing happens when you stroke a piece of plastic. Only the real thing works, and praise the lord, now we have it.

Letterz to the Editor

Judge Not... Lest Ye Be Judged.

After reading the article written by Louigi Addario-Berry which was published in The McGill Daily on January 25, 1999, I felt a compelling need to respond. Were we all to ignore this article, entitled "Comment: McGill Carnival Fails to Change," not only would the readers suffer from lack of information but The McGill Daily would lose additional credibility as a result.

This piece of work attempted to detail two events without the benefit of interviews with Carnival participants and indeed, without even sourcing anyone! The article which trashed Carnival in its entirety, was written solely through the eyes of one person who visited these events for a few minutes on the first day of a week-long celebration. To say that it is biased is quite an understatement. This was clearly an editorial, written solely with the purpose of expressing the pre-conceived opinions of the author, which should never have been printed under the mask of an objective article.

Letter to the Editor

All students are indebted to Bryan Chung for his informative article illustrating the extent of the fees paid at McGill ("Four Years for the Price of Five").

A truly civilized society guarantees through state support that every member has adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, decent salaried work and education from primary through the P.L.D.

Respectfully,
David S. Rovins

Wouldn't readers have a much more complete view of Management's Winter Carnival if they had been informed about the snow sculpture contest, the scavenger hunts, the skits or the co-ed sporting events? How about the mandatory attendance of participants at McGill's Cancer Auction, the proceeds of which help fund cancer research?

Addario also neglected to cite other examples of social responsibility, such as the invitation of the Sexual Assault Center of McGill University to conduct sensitivity workshops, or the tight controls placed on team names, logos and activities. As a third-year Winter Carnival team captain, I question the journalistic value of an article whose investigation failed to uncover this in-

formation.

I ask not that Louigi Addario-Berry join in these activities, or even that he understand why they exist. All I ask is that if he wishes to play the part of a journalist, he should take this responsibility a little more seriously. After all, some people believe everything they read...

Jason Dolman

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by Karl Gowenlock

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Split-run magazines are 'Canadian' editions of foreign (American) magazines that con-

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Terry Malden, executive vice-president of Maclean Hunter Publishing Ltd., affirms that "the advantageous cost structure enjoyed by split-run magazines allows U.S. publishers to discount their advertising rates as much as 60 per cent below our rates and still

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The policy of protecting the domestic magazine industry from American split-run editions first began in 1963 with a tariff that effectively barred their importation. In 1993, Sports Illustrated found a way around the tariff by beaming their editorial content into Canada via satellite and reprinting it here, effectively bypassing Canada Customs Tariffs.

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ADDRESSING BREAST CANCER WITH AUTHOR ANIKO GALAMBOS

by Melanie Takefman

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That was five years ago. She hasn't returned to her office since.

When Galambos was diagnosed with cancer, she became enraged. She blamed her cancer on everything that was wrong with her life and her career. She even considered suing the corporation where she had been employed. Once the initial response of anger began to subside, she read every book she could find about breast cancer; however, she could find no remedies for her emotional wounds, only scientific facts.

Galambos wanted reassurance, comfort and hope—the kind of help which is absent in the rigid medical system.

In order to guarantee that other breast cancer victims would not have to suffer from the emotional void as she had, Galambos combined her skills as a writer, her anger, and the extensive network of breast cancer support and counselling groups and sent work. Quitting her high-stress job allowed Galambos to focus on her passion for writing. Her efforts resulted in *An Unexpected Journey: Women's Voices of Hope After Breast Cancer*. It is an anthology of breast cancer stories from twelve different women from across Canada and her contribution to the com-

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However, since Galambos wanted to write each testimony in the first person, it was essential that she empathize with each woman but she chose to write about her own experience.

"It was very important for me to feel a very strong bond with each person I was interviewing," she told the Daily. "I needed to have her speak her allowed me to be their person."

For example, Galambos could relate to Gilda Neri, whose story focused on the challenges she faced with obtaining money for proper cancer treatments, because she knew what poverty was like.

Writing about someone else's experiences in first person may seem in poor taste, especially concerning such an intimate

topic. Galambos pulls it off flawlessly. Her writing is both descriptive and engaging. By the time I finished the book, I felt like I had twelve new friends.

An Unexpected Journey serves an essential function to women who are isolated, or who do not have the courage to share their stories. The book reads like a sup-

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their bodies. Many of them had to overcome false diagnoses, negligent doctors and self-doubt in order to receive the proper treatments.

"Doctors...tend to take advantage of women in weak situations," Galambos said.

Her message to all women is imperative: take control and trust your instincts.

"We know our bodies better than doctors know our bodies," she said.

Early detection is crucial, she said, especially for young women, because breast cancer in their demographic is often deadly. In fact, Sophie LeBlanc, the youngest woman to be chronicled, died last winter at the age of 32. The rest of the women are still alive.

"The key to early detection and the key to saving your life is taking control of your health," Galambos said vehemently. "You simply cannot take no for an answer."

Breast cancer is a double-edged sword: some people are ashamed to discuss it because of its sexual implications, and like any disease, cancer tends to remain secretive in society.

That's why this book should be required reading for breast cancer patients and their families. Not only does Galambos break the silence surrounding breast cancer, but she affirms that healing is as much spiritual as it is physical.



Author Aniko Galambos

port group meeting; each story is deeply personal. I had a clear picture of each woman in my head after reading her story.

Each woman in Galambos' book has a different angle to her story, an aspect which attracts the scope of her audience. Sophie LeBlanc, for example, became a devout Buddhist during her ar-

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The string that tied all of these women together was their need to take control of their lives and

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by Blanche DuSwamp BRAND NEW PENN

My beloved V has a crush on James Dean. I have no problem with this because I am presently pursuing a passion for Eva Marie Saint. Besides, my digestive tract goes randomly screwy for short inexplicable periods of time, so I can see how she'd want to trade up. All the same, I'd be mighty obliged if you wouldn't mention the Eve Marie Saint thing to my beloved V. I might be spanked.

In the last few years, Sean Penn has been trying to reinvent his iconic status; to quash that miserable lout who terrorized reporters and Madonna while making limp, puerile movies like *Shanghai Surprise*. Suddenly, the same guy is becoming a serious contender for the Great American Actors club. Penn is in a pupil phase, like Christina Ricci was in *The Ice Storm*. His is a Caesar-sized ambition, and it's time to see if Sean is worth his spurs.

In recent years, Penn has swung like Tarzan from character drama to character drama, bending over backwards to amplify his range, style and pitch, playing the cool and playing the manic; swaying wildly like a border in wartime. Penn spins around more than my washing machine - not as cleanly, but just as loud. He is found courting filmmakers and actors of vogue, from Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon, to Kevin Spacey, Terrence Malick and John Travolta. *Dead Man Walking* led to *U-Turn* which led to *She's So Lovely* which led to *Hurlyburly* which led to *The Thin Red Line*. Ol' Sean's movin' up. Lock up your daughters lock up your wives, lock up your front doors and run for your lives! (I've always wanted to say that).

The trick is how to accomplish it. It seems to me that the only way Penn can reconcile the recklessness and violence of his youth with a proficiency in his trade, is to go after the same image Brando and Dean went after: the reckless, sexy genius. A brief look at Penn's work of this year might shed some light on some good old fashioned pop culture slight of hand.

Terrence Malick's much-hyped movie, *The Thin Red Line*, about the WWII invasion of Guadalcanal, features every male actor on earth shooting guns. The effect is a little too much like a circle jerk, but generally well managed and the egos are spread

thinly enough to give each famous actor some breathing room. I don't know how I feel about the rabid connection the film makes between poetry, both visual and spoken, and war. Here, this equation is not as intelligible as it might be in Ancient Greek verses or in *Cyrano De Bergerac*. Malick's scenes of suspenseful violence are underscored with a haunting poetic parallel narrative (this movie just begs to be called lyrical), and it seems sort of, well, *lurid*. Nevertheless, Malick's movie is worthy of a great deal of praise. There are at least passages of the movie that are so carefully controlled and cleanly conceived, it appears that they've been worked on for years. In the film, Penn plays the self-resolute de facto leader of an attack squadron. A pure classic soldier whose philosophy chalks up to an "I ain't worth a hill of beans in this crazy world" mentality. Of all the Hollywood imports in this film, Penn, John Cusack and Elias Koteas are the only ones that really fit in.

Hurlyburly, on the other hand is a mess of biblical proportions. About a group of self-centred misogynistic coke-heads in L.A., *Hurlyburly* seems like one of those movies that is supposed to "indict" some social category or another. All the film really does is masturbate to the rhythm of its own cupidity, vice and cruelty, making a Tennessee Williams play with a group of emotional Gorgons. The players are Penn, Kevin Spacey, Chazz Palminteri, Robin Wright Penn, Meg Ryan, Gary Shandling (!), and Anna Paquin. There are many disturbing issues about these characters, but the one that got me the most was the sexualization of Paquin (who was just a gasping little wisp of a girl six years ago when she won her Oscar for *The Piano*). Paquin plays a runaway kid who is "found in the elevator" and given as a gift from Shandling to roommates Spacey and Penn; traded like a playing card, and a willing one at that. This *laissez-faire* behaviour reminds me of *Showgirls*.

The dialogue is built around a strange mixture of polysyllabic tripe and visceral grunts, designed to highlight meaninglessness, or something along those lines, I guess. But it gets tired, and the film descends to a kind of postmodern intellectual gore.

Hurlyburly is very much built around Penn. I'd go so far as to say that its lack of motion and incoherence are the direct result of somebody's decision to intentionally throw Penn's frustrations, fugues, and nonsensical diatribes into high relief. A character drama with only one real set and too much talk already, is totally undermined when it becomes no more than a vehicle for a lead actor. Character dramas thrive on relationships, not individuals, in the same way that costume drama's thrive on sex, and not costumes.

So what the fuck is Penn doing in these movies? On the one hand we have Penn in a movie which will no doubt be synonymous with "art film" for at least a couple of months. On the other hand, he stars in a big, blubbery powerhouse of an immorality tale. It seems to me that Penn's been smart about his pupil phase: He's done two movies in rapid succession that are both edgy and dangerous

enough for somebody to reasonably say: "It wasn't good, but Sean Penn was great in it. Man he's a great actor" - which is exactly how people describe the vast

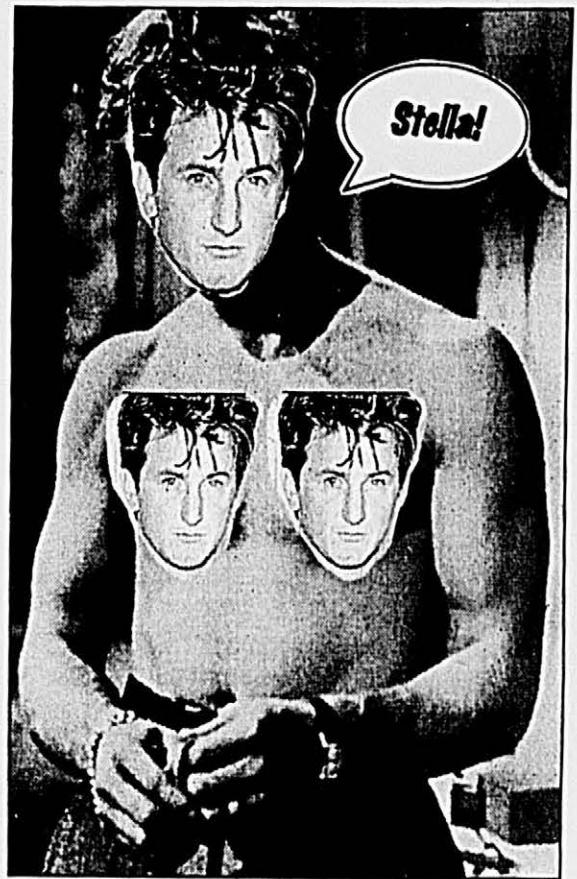
number of Marlon Brando movies and all three of James Dean's movies. These are the kinds of projects that give Penn something even more precious than the Oscar: Notoriety. Notoriety made Brando, Dean, Mickey Rourke, Dennis Hopper, Valentino and every other Cool Guy who is marketed specifically to make patrician teenage panties wet.

So long as you've got Notoriety, you can even go without making a terrific movie for a decade. Because Notoriety is the

cup of superstardom. No slow build-ups or plugging away at the old grindstone; Notoriety is public image.

So long as Penn remains notorious, he is safe from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Notoriety and good digestion - that's what it's all about.

The Thin Red Line is playing at Faubourg; Hurlyburly is at the Eaton Centre.



THE NEW AND IMPROVED SEAN PENN

Exploring Uncharted Territory GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND FEMINIST THEORY IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

by Marika Crowther

To me, geography has always been just that: geography. It is cartography, topography and seismography. The approach taken to subject matter such as this, is however being called into question. With the rise and more widespread interest in issues concerning women, sexuality, and gender, traditional subjects are now being infiltrated with new, alternative perspectives for old material.

This long-awaited change is, according to Ph.D. student Julie Podmore, one that has been needed, particularly in her field of study, geography. Podmore and a colleague therefore proposed a course that would incorporate this subject-matter into a study of geography.

It took two years, but the course *Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Theory in Environmental Studies* is finally a reality. I spoke with Podmore, the course instructor, last week. She is now completing her



PHOTO BY ROBIN TURNER

Ph.D. in Feminist Theory in Geography.

Podmore chose the title of the course quite carefully, as she wanted to portray the environment in a light other than its traditional geological sense. She intends to demonstrate how geography also addresses the relationship between humans and the environment and, as the course title suggests, feminist theory in environmental studies.

Podmore outlined the course as

follows, "The first half of the course examines the development of feminist geography, as well as exploring a variety of spatial structures and environments from a feminist perspective. The second half includes the adoption of a post-colonial feminist perspective and the exploration of the relationships between feminist geography and other geographies of difference, such as those based on class, race and sexuality."

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The trick is how to accomplish it. It seems to me that the only way Penn can reconcile the recklessness and violence of his youth with a proficiency in his trade, is to go after the same image Brando and Dean went after: the reckless, sexy genius. A brief look at Penn's work of this year might shed some light on some good old fashioned pop culture slight of hand.

Terrence Malick's much-hyped movie, *The Thin Red Line*, about the WWII invasion of Guadalcanal, features every male actor on earth shooting guns. The effect is a little too much like a circle jerk, but generally well managed and the egos are spread

thinly enough to give each famous actor some breathing room. I don't know how I feel about the rabid connection the film makes between poetry, both visual and spoken, and war. Here, this equation is not as intelligible as it might be in Ancient Greek verses or in *Cyrano De Bergerac*. Malick's scenes of suspenseful violence are underscored with a haunting poetic parallel narrative (this movie just begs to be called lyrical), and it seems sort of, well, *lurid*. Nevertheless, Malick's movie is worthy of a great deal of praise. There are at least passages of the movie that are so carefully controlled and cleanly conceived, it appears that they've been worked on for years. In the film, Penn plays the self-resolute de facto leader of an attack squadron. A pure classic soldier whose philosophy chalks up to an "I ain't worth a hill of beans in this crazy world" mentality. Of all the Hollywood imports in this film, Penn, John Cusack and Elias Koteas are the only ones that really fit in.

Hurlyburly, on the other hand is a mess of biblical proportions. About a group of self-centred misogynistic coke-heads in L.A., *Hurlyburly* seems like one of those movies that is supposed to "indict" some social category or another. All the film really does is masturbate to the rhythm of its own cupidity, vice and cruelty, making a Tennessee Williams play with a group of emotional Gorgons. The players are Penn, Kevin Spacey, Chazz Palminteri, Robin Wright Penn, Meg Ryan, Gary Shandling (!), and Anna Paquin. There are many disturbing issues about these characters, but the one that got me the most was the sexualization of Paquin (who was just a gasping little wisp of a girl six years ago when she won her Oscar for *The Piano*). Paquin plays a runaway kid who is "found in the elevator" and given as a gift from Shandling to roommates Spacey and Penn; traded like a playing card, and a willing one at that. This *laissez-faire* behaviour reminds me of *Showgirls*.

The dialogue is built around a strange mixture of polysyllabic tripe and visceral grunts, designed to highlight meaninglessness, or something along those lines, I guess. But it gets tired, and the film descends to a kind of postmodern intellectual gore.

Hurlyburly is very much built around Penn. I'd go so far as to say that its lack of motion and incoherence are the direct result of somebody's decision to intentionally throw Penn's frustrations, fugues, and nonsensical diatribes into high relief. A character drama with only one real set and too much talk already, is totally undermined when it becomes no more than a vehicle for a lead actor. Character dramas thrive on relationships, not individuals, in the same way that costume drama's thrive on sex, and not costumes.

So what the fuck is Penn doing in these movies? On the one hand we have Penn in a movie which will no doubt be synonymous with "art film" for at least a couple of months. On the other hand, he stars in a big, blubbery powerhouse of an immorality tale. It seems to me that Penn's been smart about his pupil phase: He's done two movies in rapid succession that are both edgy and dangerous

enough for somebody to reasonably say: "It wasn't good, but Sean Penn was great in it. Man he's a great actor" - which is exactly how people describe the vast

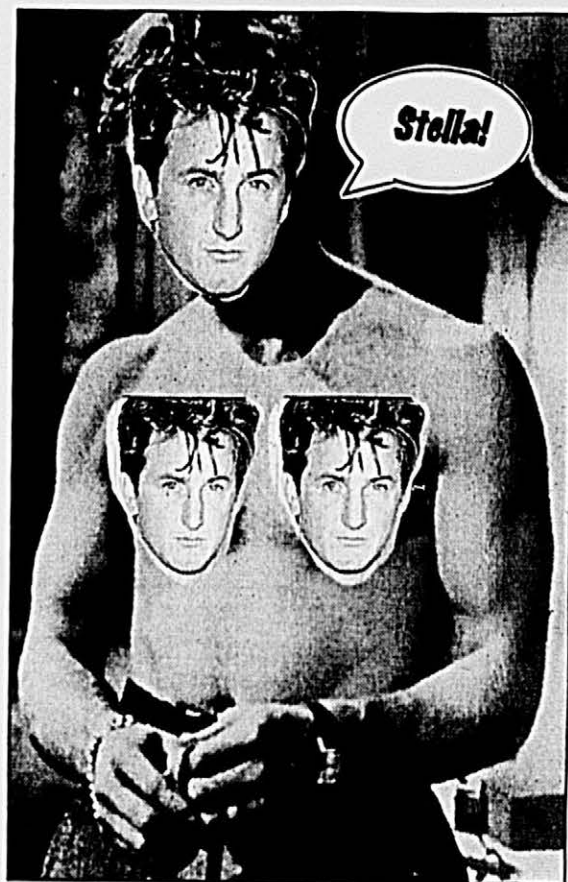
number of Marlon Brando movies and all three of James Dean's movies. These are the kinds of projects that give Penn something even more precious than the Oscar: Notoriety. Notoriety made Brando, Dean, Mickey Rourke, Dennis Hopper, Valentino and every other Cool Guy who is marketed specifically to make patrician teenage panties wet.

So long as you've got Notoriety, you can even go without making a terrific movie for a decade. Because Notoriety is the

clasp of superstardom. No slow build-ups or plugging away at the old grindstone; Notoriety is public image.

So long as Penn remains notorious, he is safe from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Notoriety and good digestion - that's what it's all about.

The Thin Red Line is playing at Faubourg; Hurlyburly is at the Eaton Centre.



THE NEW AND IMPROVED SEAN PENN

Exploring Uncharted Territory

GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND FEMINIST THEORY IN

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

by Marika Crowther

To me, geography has always been just that: geography. It is cartography, topography and seismography. The approach taken to subject matter such as this, is however being called into question. With the rise and more widespread interest in issues concerning women, sexuality, and gender, traditional subjects are now being infiltrated with new, alternative perspectives for old material.

This long-awaited change is, according to Ph.D. student Julie Podmore, one that has been needed, particularly in her field of study, geography. Podmore and a colleague therefore proposed a course that would incorporate this subject-matter into a study of geography.

It took two years, but the course *Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Theory in Environmental Studies* is finally a reality. I spoke with Podmore, the course instructor, last week. She is now completing her



Ph.D. in Feminist Theory in Geography.

Podmore chose the title of the course quite carefully, as she wanted to portray the environment in a light other than its traditional geological sense. She intends to demonstrate how geography also addresses the relationship between humans and the environment and, as the course title suggests, feminist theory in environmental studies.

Podmore outlined the course as

follows, "The first half of the course examines the development of feminist geography, as well as exploring a variety of spatial structures and environments from a feminist perspective. The second half includes the adoption of a post-colonial feminist perspective and the exploration of the relationships between feminist geography and other geographies of difference, such as those based on class, race and sexuality."

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Chutzpah Personified

THE ART OF MARNI LEVITT

by Marta Cooper

Marni Levitt's integration of feminism and music, following in the folk tradition of queer wonder woman Ani diFranco, sets her in a special class of female musicians in Montréal. I first noticed Marni when she was the smart, cute girl who sat in the back corner of my Women and Music class. Looking back, that course was one of the most challenging Women's Studies courses on my transcript, but it was the class dynamic—not the course material—that distinguished it from all others. In one camp were the Women's Studies students: the feminists who knew their theory backward and forward and could apply it, more or less successfully, to almost any aspect of life. In the other camp were the Music students with their wealth of knowledge not only of classical conventions and notation, but also of the history of music and of historiography. The two groups spoke completely different languages, which caused more than one misunderstanding.

There were only a handful in the room who could navigate both discourses. Marni belonged to this third group. Curious to see the articulate brain-child on stage, I decided to check out one of her gigs—was I in for a surprise. There was no separating the mind from the body when Marni performed: the cute brain child had transformed into a sexy woman full of energy and emotion. When she sang "I am the Enigma," I thought, "Ya got that one right, honey."

That was two years ago. Since then, I've watched her career and her work develop, and I've had many chances to talk with her about being an artist, and how it relates to feminism. For many artists, being true to oneself is necessary to create authentic, integral work. But being true is not always easy. In early January, I spoke with Marni in Le Figaro Café about her music, her burgeoning career, and how these relate to identity and finding truth.

Marni Levitt: When I was young, I couldn't sing. My best friends would make fun of me because I had this horrible voice. I got my tonsils out in grade two

—that helped a bit, because they were huge tonsils! When I was thirteen-years-old I had a Batmitzvah, because I'm a reform Jew. I trained for six months learning the Torah portion—that's chanting in Hebrew. So I'm learning how to sing: I'm listening to my tutor, learning how to mimic him. This was a big thing in terms of finding my voice. And I could actually sing! I never knew I could. I got up on the Bima in front of all my friends and all my family and my relatives and I read from the Torah for half an hour, and then I read from the Haftora for another twenty-five minutes. And everyone told me, Marni, you have a beautiful voice chanting from the Torah.

Marta Cooper: How does your Jewish identity relate specifically to your music and your work as a producer?

ML: My Jewishness is not explicit [in my lyrics] but it's so much a part of who I am as an artist, and also as a producer. Producing shows involves a lot of chutzpah—you have to have a lot of balls to call people up and ask them to perform. You have to be pushy in order to be organ-

ized and get things done on time. Being brought up in the Jewish community, I learned how to be an assertive person, an assertive woman. To ask for what I want and not be shy. I learned how important community is, and how to organize large groups of people; an important part of putting shows together.

You know how there's that image of the woman being the an-

the world and that was the norm. For orthodox women it probably is a totally different story.

MC: What does it mean to be Jewish and feminist?

ML: Fighting for social justice and equality is part of the mandate of being Jewish, so there is a very specific connection to feminism. A lot of women's and feminist movements have been well attended or led by Jewish women.

MC: Jewish women's leadership in feminism is probably something that isn't widely known. You'd have to search for the information to get it.

ML: All you have to do is look on the lists of feminist organizations, look in feminist anthologies, feminist professors, and you'll see Jewish names.

MC: True. But, for instance, I'm from a small town and I couldn't recognize Jewish names until I'd lived several years in Montreal. How do you reconcile my inability to identify your name, with Jewishness being a big part of who you are? When it's not explicitly part of your music, can it be erased?

ML: I stand up there to perform in front of a large crowd, and they don't usually read me as a Jewish woman, nor do they necessarily read me as a queer woman. I have long hair. I wear make-up when I perform quite often. I look, maybe, straight. But if you listen a little closer to my lyrics, you could maybe figure out that I'm not straight.

MC: Is it partly that categories are just too simple and people need to listen more closely?

ML: I think so. That's the whole post modernist art framework. That's why I don't get up there with a labrys [lesbian power emblem], or with a shaved head, which I used to have—but I've changed. I just get up there. I like to fool the audience. I like people to see me as one thing and hear me as another, to mix the categories and play with people's perceptions of me. The stage and the performance space is a great place to do that.

MC: One of the things that I'm always struck by is that you have a lot of charisma. And you're gutsy.

ML: That's another Jewish thing.

MC: And you're really sexy up there.

ML: Thank you. [Laughs]
MC: And when I look at these photos, I think 'Wow. This is beautiful.' Now, this is something that I think about a lot. For queer women, at least, there's a lot of pressure to be queer in a certain way. And there are body image questions which really come to the fore when you're a fairly public figure and you're performing a lot. Body issues are so present when you're on stage, and one of the things that I think is so cool is that you're really sexy on stage and you're not emaciated. You're not the little skinny Calvin Klein person whom we've been told is sexy. I find that really exciting.

I assume that when you're going to perform, you think about the image that you're going to portray, and you've chosen not to be the short-haired dyke with multiple piercings and no bra and big clunky army boots. You have chosen not to take that identity, which I'm assuming is an explicit choice, because that's where



MARNI DOING WHAT SHE DOES BEST

"Being brought up in the Jewish community, I learned how to be an assertive person, an assertive woman. To ask for what I want and not be shy. I learned how important community is, and how to organize large groups of people; an important part of putting shows together."
- Marni Levitt

gel in the house, which is a Christian image of the woman being more feminine, being at home cleaning everything. I just learned in my Jewish Women's Writing class that this may not have been the case for Jewish women. If you go back in history, Jewish women have always worked in businesses: helped their husbands' or run their own. They were out in

"I stand up there to perform in front of a large crowd, and they don't usually read me as a Jewish woman, nor do they necessarily read me as a queer woman. I have long hair. I wear make-up when I perform quite often. I look, maybe, straight. But if you listen a little closer to my lyrics, you could maybe figure out that I'm not straight." -Marni Levitt

queer women get pushed when they first come out.

ML: When I did first come out, that was more my image. A little bit tougher. Shaved head, no make-up ever, no skirts ever. After I made that space for myself, I was able to explore in a more relaxed way. Sometimes I do like to wear lipstick. Sometimes I do like to wear skirts. And I started dating some butch women who helped define my identity more as a femme. But I put [my femme look] on and I take it off. Some days I put on jeans and a t-shirt and put my hair in a ponytail and I don't care. There are other days when I can totally dress up and bring out my femme side. I guess when I perform, more often than not, the femme side comes through.

But I think I'm different than a lot of women with body image. I've actually had very few problems with body image. I'm basically just confident with my body and with my sexuality too.

MC: I guess when I talk about body issues, I'm not just talking about insecurities.

ML: You're talking about being a body, right? That's what so great about music: it helps me to be in my body. Music is such a physical thing. Our bodies are made up of 60% water. Water responds to vibrations in the air, which is what music is. That's why your whole body feels compelled to dance, compelled to sing, to move when you hear music. Your entire being responds to it on a physical level.

Also on a spiritual level. Music vibrations are invisible, so they allow you to connect with things that are invisible. It's a very spiritual thing for me as well. Being a student, I'm always in my head. Music is a great way to get back into my body.

MC: The spiritual side of music is what brought you to performing: the feeling of grief with the death of your sister. I remember the first time you told me about that, I was surprised, because I see you go up on stage and you're excited. It's like, 'I am Woman, Hear me Roar!' Not, 'I am Woman, Hear me Weep.' How is that contradiction there?

ML: I think there is a huge con-

nection between grief and creativity or grief and art. The person who you love so much who has left the world will continue to have an influence on the world through you if you decide to create art, music, poetry, writing, whatever. So whatever their spirit is, will continue to influence what you are and what you do. My sister Stacey was a very energetic and exuberant, wonderful, happy, well-liked person. Beautiful, athletic. Her energy, when she died, was left hanging in the air, and those of us closest to her took that into ourselves. It's such an intense, exuberant energy, that I'm not surprised that I come out like that on stage, too.

I never considered music seriously until she died, because I wasn't writing things that I felt were that meaningful, or that many people would connect to. But once she died I started writing songs that were really, really coming from the core of my being. Really beautiful as a result, because I think that kind of truth is beautiful. I wanted to share that with other people, and again, share Stacey's influence on the world through me. Grief takes you down to the barest roots of your being, and it's so hard. You hit rock bottom, and the only other place

to go is up. Music took me up, up, up, almost to the other extreme. When I first started performing, I was the opposite of being depressed. I was up, up, up, and very out there. But now I've mellowed out a little, or maybe I've mellowed out a lot. Some of my music is darker, or more sad now.

MC: There were a couple things that I noticed about your newer songs. One was that there was a difference in tone. There's a big difference between 'I am the Enigma' [very upbeat] and 'Water' [more melancholic]. Was this process something that you had to go through to be able to write with authenticity? With integrity?

ML: For me, my art is very much about truth: personal truth and spiritual truth. I think grief does take you on a journey. The journey is not linear - it's cyclical. You seem to pass over the same phases over and over again. You oscillate between down and up, back and forth. Music is a great vehicle to take that journey in. I was very lucky that I had that mode of expression, because some people don't. Before Stacey died I already knew how to express myself through music, but it became oh so much more important when she died. Music was my saving grace.

MC: And a framework to work out things like gender and sexuality.

ML: Definitely.

MC: I remember you saying to me once, 'I work on my voice a lot and I need to work more on my guitar.' I didn't see you perform for about six months, and when I saw you perform again, there was a definite improvement. What are you doing with your guitar work?

ML: I'm experimenting more. A lot of artists, like Ani diFranco and Joni Mitchell, don't necessarily know the names of the chords they're playing. They just play them because they sound good. I think that's a totally legitimate approach, and that's the one that I've taken. Reena (from Parkside Jones) was showing me some interesting chords that she figured out of the blue, and I thought, 'Wait a minute. I don't have to play chords that already have names? I can just play chords that sound nice? Okay!' So I started experimenting more. I don't have to just strum the guitar back and forth. I can hit the guitar. I can slide up and down. And that's what caused me to improve.

MC: My brother was saying over the holidays that there aren't many women guitarists who are

really strong, and I responded saying, 'How many male vocalists are really great?' How do you respond to the stereotype that women are better vocalists and men are better guitarists? You do both.

ML: Sometimes guys can get very caught up in technique. Which is fine. It's great. Technique is so important. I won't argue with that. However, for me it's not the most interesting thing about music. It's not the most full, encompassing thing. Women tend to approach things not only with their minds or with their hands, but with their full bodies and their hearts. Your singing voice comes from deep within your body.

MC: One of the issues that came up in Women and Music is that women's voices have been idolized in almost every culture around the world, and in almost every time. The diva figure, the woman who is in a beautiful dress singing in front of the audience, what we admire is something from inside herself. I think they [guitar and voice] should both be integrated more, though. Obviously, anything I say cannot be applied to all women or all men. I can only make conjectures. Yeah, I think women should learn a little more technique and men should learn a little more emotion. The voice is I think one of the most emotional vehicles for expression, and that's why I love it.

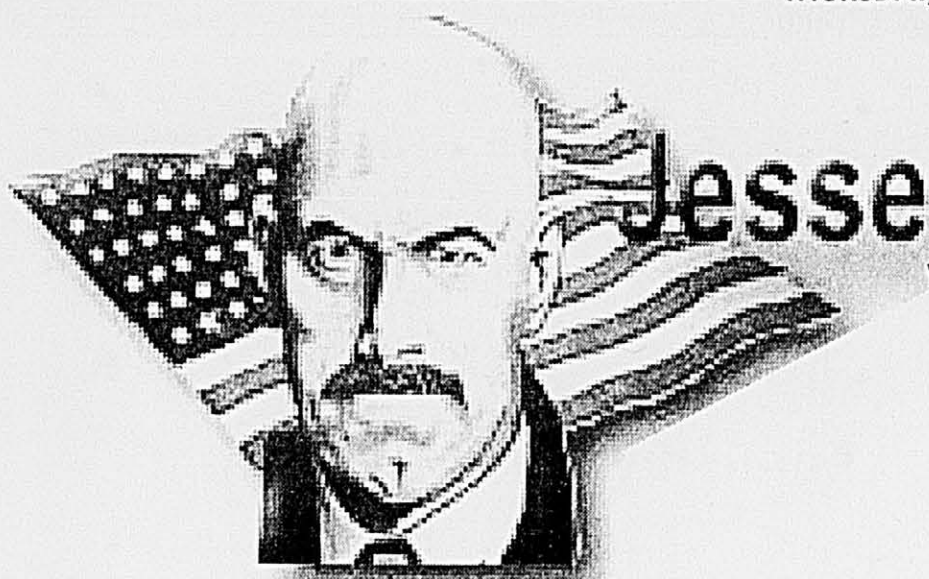
Marni Levitt opens for Mark Weinstock in Toronto on Thursday, February 4, at Free Times Café. During international Women's Week, she will perform with Veda Hill and Arena Jane-Roberts in a show co-produced by SACOMSS and SSMU, March 10, 8pm, at Club Studio (1909 St. Laurent). Marni is part of the production team organizing CHUTZPAH, a Jewish music and performance festival showcasing contemporary Jewish culture and local Jewish artists, at Café Campus on March 13.

Marta Cooper is a creative writer. She is one of the producers of FigureHead Productions.



PHOTO BY BRENDAN STEACY

MARNI LEVITT UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL



White House

by Tal Pinchevsky

As raucous a celebration as this obviously was, with beer being the soirée's beverage of choice and jeans far outnumbering suits and tuxedos, Ventura's coming-out party into the American political sphere strikes some as not completely legitimate.

Can we blame someone for dancing when we put them on a public stage and demand that they perform?

Entering the arena

The 13,800 ticket event, each ranging from \$10 to \$20, sold out in little over a day. A month later, the huddled masses flocked towards the site where this fantastic event would culminate. Rocker Warren Zevon was among the night's initial performers and teen blues guitarist Johnny Lang was among the headliners. And Johnny Lang's primary function on this night would be to better introduce this special evening's guest of honour.

This special guest, ushered in with the accompaniment of lights and pyrotechnics, met the shrieks of an adoring crowd while draped in sunglasses, a bandanna, three earrings, and a Jimi Hendrix t-shirt.

What great performer would be adorned with such adulation and fanfare on this clearly solemn occasion? Actually these events are the literal description of the celebration commemorating the inauguration of the new Governor of Minnesota, the professional wrestler formerly known as Jesse "the body" Ventura.

As raucous a celebration as this obviously was, with beer being the soiree's beverage of choice and jeans far outnumbering suits and tuxedos, Ventura's coming-out party into the American political sphere strikes some as not completely legitimate.

In holding a celebration that was both exceptionally entertaining and blue-collar, Ventura solidifies his place in Minnesota as "all things to all people." He has created a rallying cry over his blue-collar, unprofessional, and almost a-political image that has established a common ground between him and the people of

Minnesota whom he serves.

Among the central issues that have yet to be discussed by Ventura either during his campaign or at his inauguration include racial polarization, the wilting downtown area of the city of St. Paul, urban sprawl emulating Los Angeles, a substandard mass-transit system, and the collapse of numerous Minnesota family farms.

Disregarding these central issues, Ventura, who campaigned with no written tax plan and who said he would become more accustomed to political process once in office, vowed to return the state's surplus to the people (a vow that many a politician has taken with his fingers either intentionally or unintentionally crossed). He has also briefly discussed lowering taxes, legalizing marijuana and prostitution, and finding the assassins of JFK. Despite this, his short term goals of success have bore great fruition, after all, he got me to write about him.

Ventura described his situation best, (although in a somewhat hypothetical context) in stating prior to his election "maybe it will be a popularity contest, and if it is, you're looking at the next Governor."

This is simply the continuation of the propensity for celebrities to run for public office and for the voting public to elect them. Past notable politicians that arose from less than humble beginnings include: longtime actor Ronald Reagan, who became Governor of California and eventually, the President of the United States; California Congressman Sonny Bono, who previously enjoyed several years on television and radio; New York Senator Bill Bradley, who had already retired from a successful career in the National Basketball Association prior to running for public office; Clint Eastwood, who did a stint as the mayor of Carmel, California; and Fred Grandy, the former star of *The Love Boat* is now a former Iowa Representative.

Give the people what they want

A recent poll taken South of

the border asked which celebrities should run for public office. Those polled chose television personality Oprah Winfrey over Oscar-winning actor Tom Hanks as their number one choice, although Hanks has already acted as a campaign supporter to the current President Bill Clinton. The mere existence of this poll indicates that the general population has already given this particular issue a great deal of thought. There is no doubt that during several momentary lapses in the frame-



THE LOVE BOAT STAR FRED GRANDY WENT ON TO BECOME AN IOWA REPRESENTATIVE

work of our political culture, being a celebrity has played a large role on not only the appointment of these officials but also in their mere recognition by the public as viable candidates for office.

When asked about what these results indicate regarding the voting public, Harold Waller a professor of political science at McGill, countered with an even more convincing question: "What does this say about the pollsters that asked this question?" Waller pointed out, "Tom Hanks is an actor, he plays characters in films. Voters are not familiar with him on a personal level, they are familiar with his characters."

The system that America employs today is one in which being a celebrity just might outweigh the merit of occupying political office. In 1992, for example, Democratic nomination

for the Presidency of the United States Bill Clinton appeared, as part of his campaign, on the then-popular "Arsenio Hall Show" sporting dark sunglasses and tooting a saxophone with all the charisma and style that the rest of that fine cultural relic exemplified on that night. This appearance altered many voters' perceptions of candidate Clinton and allowed him to stray from the traditional and outdated politician's model of kissing babies and shaking hands, which he no doubt continues to do.

Another prominent example of dignified public presentation as a political necessity is pointed out by professor Waller. This is the 1960 television debate between presidential hopefuls John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. While those paying close attention to the debate on the radio found Nixon to be the more convincing of the two, support drastically swayed towards the Kennedy camp as his clean-cut image was favoured over Nixon's, as Nixon had not shaved prior to the debate and was considered shady as a result.

Media and political structures

The general reputation of politicians around the world has been significantly trodden on as media scrutiny has brought even the slightest character flaw to light.

Although this does not make one less able a politician, there will inevitably be some sort of falling out with some sectors of the population over such scandal. In the past several years we have witnessed the court-martial of politicians around the world for everything from drugs, to prostitution, to violent acts. We have also seen a President already drowning in alleged financial mishaps regarding everything from Whitewater to Japanese businessmen being forced to confront his much maligned sexual agenda.

Further solidifying this point, second year McGill student John K. Kennedy, when asked why he hated politicians, bluntly replied, "because they're crooks."

Does this make these civil servants any less capable of governing their respective constituencies? Absolutely not.

So are celebrities simply more trustworthy and capable of serving and administering the public? Think about that question long and hard before arriving at the correct answer, which is no.

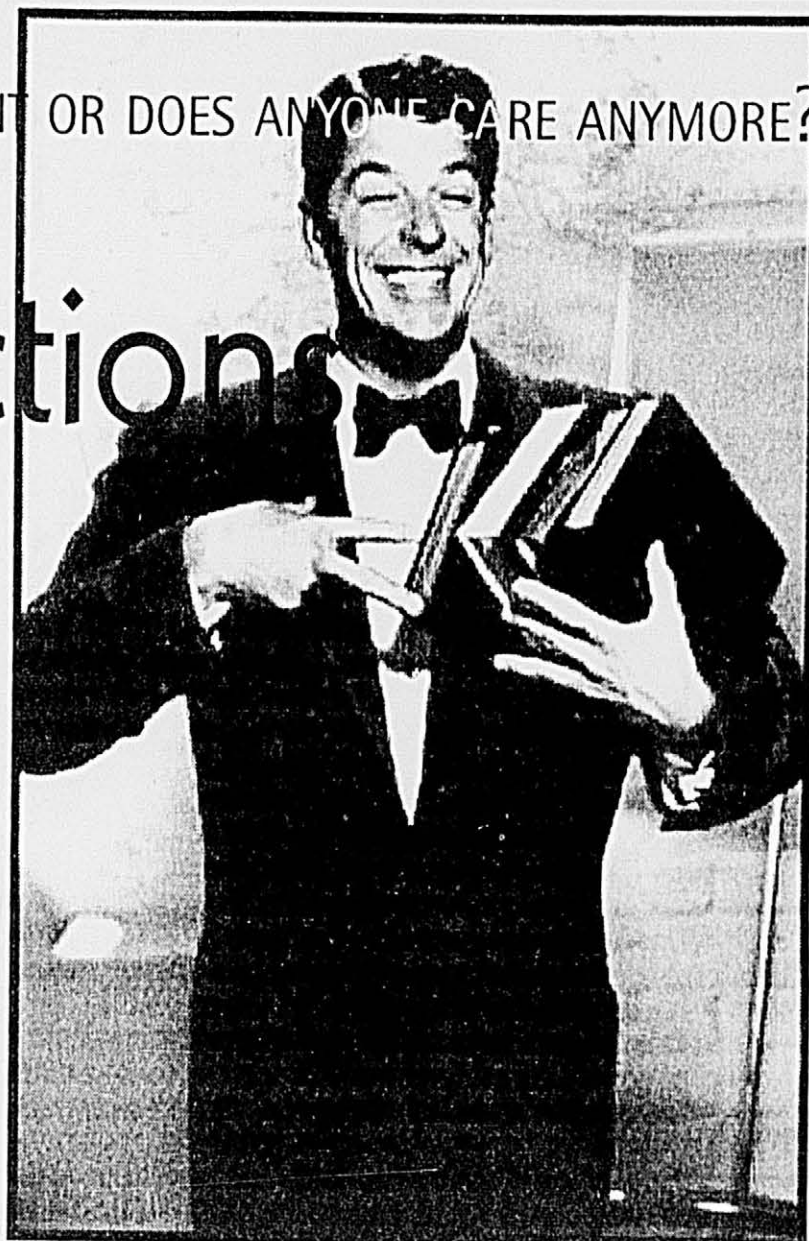
While this trend is quite recognizable in the United States, it has not manifested itself entirely in Canada. The few notable examples include hockey stars such as Senator Frank Mahovlich, Jean Beliveau who was offered political opportunity but decided to pass on it, and hippie magician Doug Henning who ran as a candidate for the Natural Law Party in 1992. A more latent and less convincing example is Erik Nielsen, brother of Naked Gun star Leslie Nielsen, who was Brian Mulroney's deputy PM.

It would appear that the most likely reason for fewer celebrity politicians in Canada would be because of most Canadian celebrities flock to greener pastures in the United States. While enjoying a more valuable dollar, lower taxes, and an environment that facilitates their career, there is little to be said for returning to Canada in order to become a part of its government in any context.

Through further evaluation, one may delineate more concrete answers founded in a political perspective. The most prominent

IS POLITICS REALLY ENTERTAINMENT OR DOES ANYONE CARE ANYMORE?

Coming Attractions



FORMER US PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN DURING HIS ACTING DAYS

of these reasons would be the presence of the parliamentary system in Canada which is absent in American political culture. It is this dichotomy that has allowed American politics to be scripted in every facet. You can be sure that every sound byte, every speech, every time Governor Ventura opens his mouth, he is regurgitating the words of a staff aid with the same ease and effortlessness that he once demonstrated in his patented body slams.

Professor Stephen Gallagher of McGill University further explains this Canadian propensity to act rather than passively read someone else's speech in saying, "Canadian politicians tend to be better at that kind of on-your-feet, off-the-cuff, solid debating and constant speeches because the House of Commons is a forum for performance art. That's why you see Americans before elections setting up camps and hiring special media coaches because, on the average, their politicians don't get the opportunity to hone their debating skills like ours (Canadian politicians) do."

In my opinion we are lucky to live in a political system which rejects the ability to read and a well-coifed visage as the only criteria for occupying public office.

Other variables contributing to this prevalent division between American and Canadian politics include differing electoral systems and a higher percentage of voters among Canadians. But the most prominent of these variables would be the one regarding the occupation of that elusive mantle which all poli-

ticians lust for: power.

In the United States, where we have already established that the average politician can get by with little to no political aptitude, the leader of any party must bring a marketable image to the table. President Bill Clinton, for example, is a man who maintains an effective speaking style while managing other important intangibles such as his finely coifed dome, his good posture, and his amiable manner. This is a far cry from the man he defeated in the 1992 presidential election, former president George Bush who many considered cold, somewhat wimpish, and just plain boring.

In order to attain party leadership in Canada, these photogenic factors aren't nearly as important as the organization one can put together and one's actual ability to perform in a sophisticated and high-stress political

more believable as a national leader. And Jacques Parizeau had dental surgery following his occupation of the Parti Québécois leadership.

According to Gallagher "if there is a difference it is that, in our (Canada's) system, you can get the nomination without a problem. In America you have to have those star attributes to get the nomination."

That's not to say, however, that Canada is completely exempt from these growing tendencies in political cultures. Canada is a country that has produced its fair share of popular leaders who were easily able to gain greater support as a result of this kind of superficial popularity.

Leaders such as Trudeau or Mulroney apply to this particular point, but their popularity was

in Alberta, for example, gained a large and favourable following after his years as a popular member of the Edmonton Eskimos football team in the Canadian Football League. Yet this trend is far more subdued in Canada as the nation has thankfully yet to see Don Cherry run for public office.

The rising political performer

The inherent danger in this movement towards fewer civil choices for civil servants is that it blurs the once-concrete dichotomy which divided entertainment from politics. The media is to blame far more than the masses that vote these performers into public office. With the scrutiny of public officials being as intense as it is today, politicians are forced to succumb to the pressures of establishing both a public and private persona. It is in this aspect that a celebrity might actually be more able to serve publicly, having already been subjected to such intense media examination.

As McGill sociology professor Rod Nelson puts it, "media standard rationale is giving the public what it wants. The salaciousness that is put on is demanded by the audience."

These celebrities, already ac-

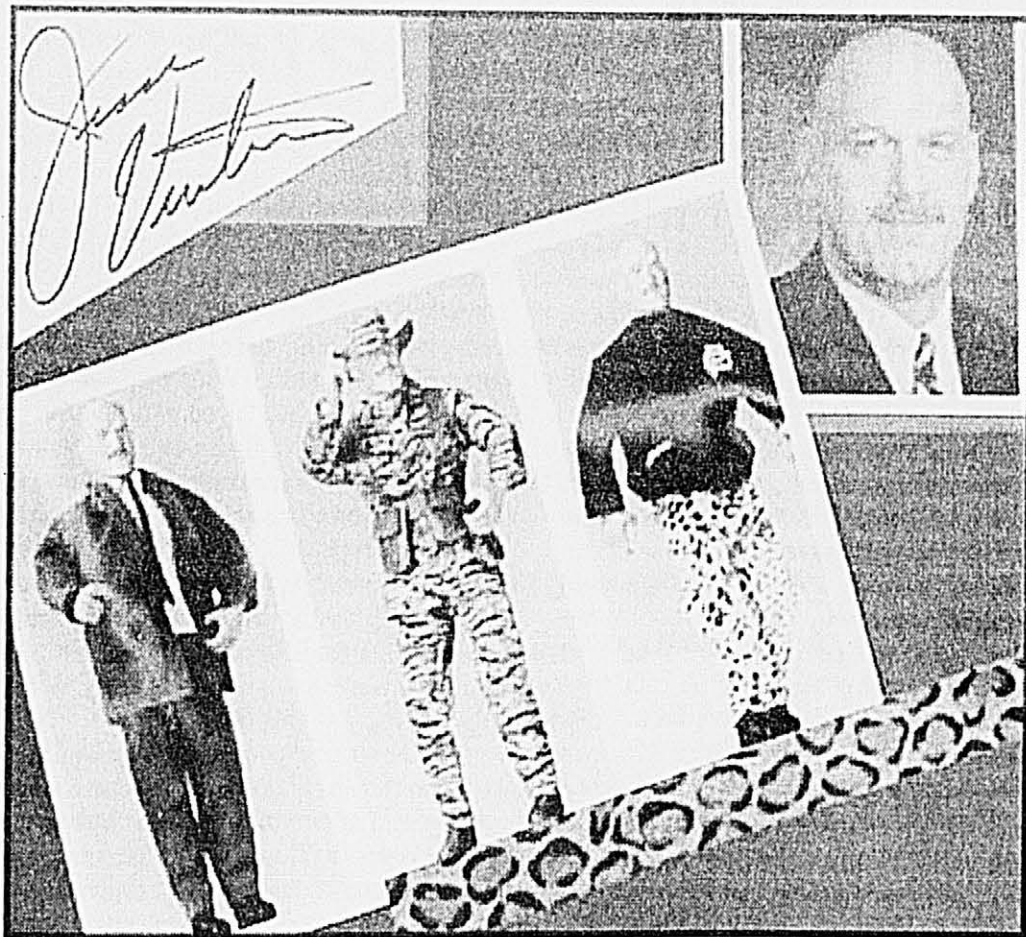
customed to performing in public, could perfect the long-practiced political tool: the apology. Wouldn't an Oscar-winning actor sound so much more convincing in apologizing for sexual infidelity and whatnot rather than, well, anyone else.

So, the politician is not entirely at fault here. Can we blame someone for dancing when we put them on a public stage and demand that they perform? Can we blame anyone for choosing a charismatic, recognizable, and comfortable persona over a cold and sterile political figure who discusses issues that the better part of the population can not even relate to let alone understand?

No, as sad as this political and social apathy might be, it is an almost universal reality.

As long as the public continues to discuss celebrity as a potential precursor to political office, this trend will continue. Seeing as how both are highly regarded social institutions subjected to the most intense media coverage, it appears we have written our own fate in this case, for better or for worse.

So, as politics has already been reduced to public performance, is it possible that the entertainment industry will be reduced to a medium for which propaganda may flow indiscriminately into our homes and eventually our minds? Probably not, but seeing as how the politician has become the performer, can we be that far from a time when the performer becomes the politician?



AN ARRAY OF JESSE VENTURA ACTION FIGURES

forum. Once the leadership of a party is occupied, it is then the party's responsibility to enhance the image of its leader. The Liberal Party, for example, bought Jean Chrétien, not the most photogenic of men, an entirely new wardrobe to make him appear

founded almost entirely in their powerful presence and the respect that it commanded. On a regional level, this tendency to lean more towards leaders with a previously established semblance of celebrity is somewhat more prevalent. Peter Lougheed

The Banal Bottle

SHADOW OF A BOTTLE, SHADOW OF A WOMAN

by Yvette Relkoff

When I walked into Eulàlia Valldosera's exhibit at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal I had no idea what to expect. What I saw were ceiling-high shadows from bottles of household cleaning fluids cast onto the walls of the dark gallery and framed in white light. The bottles were sitting on books on the floor, and the shadows were cast by empty slide projectors positioned behind them. I have to admit thinking to myself, as one so often does with contemporary art, "What's so great about that, anyone could do it." But after I saw the rest of the exhibit, and heard Valldosera talk about her art, I changed my mind and left feeling very impressed.

Valldosera explained why she chose to use bottles of cleaning fluid. She said they represented for her the female body. In Spain,

are more confined to the domestic domain than women in northern Europe and North America. Following this theme of the

woman and the mother, there were also two photographs in the exhibit of mother-goddess statuettes.

Valldosera used banal and valueless objects from toilet bowl cleaners to dish washing soap and Windex, in order to appeal to a wider audience. She chose to work with the bottles and also with light because, as she said, they are "fresh, and free of cultural charge." Light and the fluid within the bottles

revealed the way in which the shadows of the bottles were cast upon the walls. She did not conceal the bottles and projectors located on the floor by covering them up, which made them vulnerable to being stepped on. She said that she placed them on the same level to indicate that "technology and banal objects have the same value." She chose the books that the bottles were sitting on because, "They were the ones I was just not interested in anymore when I was cleaning out my bookshelf." Valldosera has decided not to work as a traditional artist, and her art is a reaction against the way traditional artists have become like workers in a factory churning out paintings for the art market.

When I looked closely at the bottle labels I noticed some had Asian characters on them, while other labels were in Spanish, English or French. She chose these banal bottles because they

are international and represent globalization. Valldosera had noticed that you could find these products in any supermarket in the world.

The shadow of one group of bottles was cast onto the wall by way of mirrors. The duck-neck bottle of toilet bowl cleaner from this particular group cast a humorous shadow. There was a group of three bottles lined up so that the shadow they cast appeared to be made by one large bottle. There were two bottles next to each other with one spinning around on a record player's turn-table. The shadow of the spinning bottle touched the shadow of the stationary bottle intermittently as it rotated. What Valldosera herself said she saw in this was that the bottles were kissing.

The whole installation of gigantic bottle shadows is called *Envases: el culto a la madre (Vessels: The Cult to the Mother)*, 1996-1998. The fun thing about *(continued on next page)*



where Valldosera is from, there are few women working in the world of art, and Spanish women

signify energy to her.

Again to appeal to a wider audience Valldosera plainly re-

The Truth is Where?

LOOKING INTO THE J FILES

by Alex Halperin

The poster was misleading. It read "Jesus - The Only Way: The Arrogance of Christianity." Without a mention of the sponsor or the lecturer, I thought it would be some black clad grad student griping that Christianity has an unwarranted stranglehold on modern culture while calling for a reassessment of values.

Upon arrival I was surprised to discover that it was an evangelical lecture given by Roger Simpson, an Anglican rector from Vancouver, and sponsored by The McGill Christian Fellowship.

The lecture itself was about Christian arrogance. Mr. Simpson cited Jesus saying in the New Testament, "None shall come to the father but by me." Here Christianity proves its arrogance by denouncing all other religions as invalid. Of course if they're right - and I'm not one to say they're not - their arrogance is justified, according to Mr.

Simpson's argument.

Simpson continued by illustrating what he perceived to be two common modern misunderstandings about religion: "Sincerity is the main thing" and "All roads lead to God." His proofs that Christianity is more valid than both these misunderstandings all came from the Bible, and included aspects of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The self-referential nature of this speech in particular and much other evangelical Christian literature in general, dictated that if someone were to become Christian, they would have to start believing the Bible. And given the critical scrutiny the Bible has undergone recently, to begin believing in this text, like joining any religion, requires an act of faith.

The lecture was part of a two-week program of lectures and discussions called "J files," which is trying to inform and presumably convert members of the

McGill community to Christianity. From career fairs to the whorish "Campus Fests" where corporations thinly veil themselves as carnival booths, there are countless organizations which vie for the time, interest and money of university students. There is no reason why Christianity or other evangelical religions should not take a crack at us as well.

At the lecture several pamphlets were available. One was a booklet called "don't judge a book by its cover!" Living up to its name, it included the gospel of Luke and a bit of commentary but had a nonsensical cover photograph of a woman getting mugged by a young thug in a bleak urban environment. There was also a pamphlet with several accounts by McGill Christians of their personal relationships with God. The third pamphlet was a "J files" book mark listing the entire program's festivities. The latter two featured a

blurry, overlapping typeset clearly alluding to the "X Files", a TV show which gleefully exploits modern paranoia for entertainment value. The pamphlets also featured variations of one of the show's slogans "The truth is out there," including "Trust in God. Trust in Jesus. Trust in Truth." And "Do you believe...the truth is out there?"

The absurdity of this lecture was not that it asked people to take a leap of faith but that it was packaged and advertised with a direct reference to "The X Files" which also boasts the slogan "Trust no one." Associating this self-aware, ironic statement with a plea for faith is hopefully just an egregious oversight. But it is a painful contradiction of style and substance.

Style and substance can be at odds with each other and still succeed. For instance the recent and successful advertising campaign by Macintosh superimposes an

apple and the catch phrase "Think different" on photos of geniuses of the last century. There is no relation of style to content. Scarcely any of those photographed lived to hear of an Apple computer, and the campaign makes no attempt to relate the unallocated images. Change the logo and it could be for shoes, candy, or dishwashing fluid.

The "X Files" motif for the McGill Christian Fellowship surpasses Macintosh's dissociation of style and substance by actually having a style which grossly contradicts the substance. One can not trust in God, trust in Jesus, trust in Truth and also simultaneously trust no one. The "X Files" is widely known which makes this spin off effective advertising, but in being recognizable, the logo must bear the burden of its connotations. In their eagerness to be recognized, the McGill Christian Fellowship has done itself a disservice.

(continued from previous page)
it was that as you walked around between the bottles and projectors, your own shadow was cast upon the wall and joined the shadows of the bottles so that you yourself became a part of the exhibit.

Another part of the exhibit was a small, ancient-looking clay jug on a shelf. The label next to it read, "This vessel appeared under the ground when my father was laying the foundations of our house." Another part of the exhibit was a video installation called "Habitación (The Room), 1996." It was a projection of the filmed shadow of an animated kitchen scene onto a three-walled room in the middle of the exhibit.

Also part of the exhibit was a TV set on the floor which showed a film of a woman on her hands and knees scrubbing the floor. The further details of this film you should discover yourself, for the film is by far the most shocking part of Valldosera's exhibition. It is an image that refuses to leave



your mind.

In an adjacent room three short films Valldosera has made were being shown on TVs. In one film, she is sweeping up cigarette butts as a way to come to terms with her failed attempt to quit smoking. She said she sees cigarette butts as well as wrinkled sheets as residual materials. They are leftovers from the everyday activities of smoking and sleeping, which are considered to be non-productive and therefore bad since to be productive in the western world is to be good.

Valldosera's art has a lot to do with the human body as a vessel or house, with emotions, sexual relationships, femininity and motherhood. It is, she said, about "building bridges between the mind and the body."

Envases: el culto a la madre (Vessels: The Cult to the Mother), 1996-1998 will be at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, 185 St. Catherine W. (847-6226) until April 25, 1999.

Motherhood Re-defined

OH MOTHER! AND STRAIGHT FROM THE SUBURBS

by Le'Nise Brothers

In today's disconnected, fractured world, the notion of what one considers family is changing everyday. The mythology of the two child, two car suburban nuclear family has been discredited, with many new emerging concepts of the family. *Oh Mother!* and *Straight From The Suburbs* are two films that take a look at motherhood and family ties.

Oh Mother!, directed by Sandra Dametto and Sara Morley, is a 1998 documentary that looks at the lives of three mothers from three eras. The first, Helen Bambic-Workman, became a mother in the 1950s, when "marriage was just something everyone did. You just got married and had children."

Bambic-Workman takes a candid look at her continual experience of being a mother and examines her previous misconceptions of motherhood compared to her actual experience. "I think I went too far sometimes, being a mother. I didn't want to end up waiting up for everyone all the time."

After the breakdown of her marriage, she "started to question being a support system and simply listening to the ideas of others." She wanted to see what

she could do and what she was interested in.

This was an important breakthrough for a woman who thought that she would find absolute fulfillment in being a mother. When absolute fulfillment didn't occur, Bambic-Workman began to make changes in her life, eventually receiving a Masters in Educational Technology from Concordia University and founding the MITE Lab (Multimedia Interactive Technology Environment) also at Concordia.

An important part of Bambic-Workman's growth to independence was her desire to be seen as a specific person, Helen, not just a generic one, Mom. She credits this change as a part of her personally taking a look at her relationship with her own mother.

"It took me a long time to come to the point where I was interested in her as a human being." Bambic-Workman believes that women today have no idea what having a child is. "You don't have the child, the child has you." Her association with her children has evolved to the point where she's trying to have a relationship that's based in the present, and not cluttered by anything in the past.

The second woman featured in

the documentary became a mother in the 1970s. She is one who has embraced the ethic of the stay-at-home mother, while trying to maintain some sense of herself. "I don't know an adult life without being a parent," says Katja MacLeod Kessin. She and her husband decided that it was important for her to stay home to raise their three children, and she feels this is important, "because most of the work in having kids is inside the home; everyday there's something to be done."

As part of having an identity separate from her children, she embraced art, which she used as a form of therapy. A pattern that she noticed in her art, and one that she was trying to imitate in life, was that she was always "trying to create these environments that were perfect." She explains further by observing that she grew up in a time where the picture of a family was one boy, one girl. Everyone expected that. "An important lesson of motherhood that MacLeod Kessin has learned is "to make sure I don't make damaging mistakes, but those that can be repaired. I make sure my children know I'm human too."

The final woman featured in *Oh Mother!* is Deborah VanSlet, the radio host of CKUT-FM's

Dykes on Mykes. Her experience as a mother has not been one in the 'traditional' sense like the two other women in the documentary. She and her partner, Erica Courvoisier, whose lifelong dream had been to have a child, recount their experience in which Courvoisier is the primary mother and VanSlet is what they call the 'Mutti', the German word for mother.

"I don't know what I imagined parenting to be. I recognized the difference between being the primary mother and what I am, the Mutti," says VanSlet. "I feel like I'm a natural at it without ever having given birth. There's a natural that comes from the relationship between two human beings." When they first started thinking about having a child together, there were many 'what-ifs' that were thrown about. "We wouldn't have imagined [at the beginning] that people would be so tolerant and accepting," says VanSlet.

The film *Straight From The Suburbs*, directed by Corole Ducharme, was also produced in 1998. It is a spoof of the sex education and public awareness films of the 1950s. In which Mary, a teenager who lives with her mothers Doris and Betty, struggles with

her emerging heterosexuality. This film creates a world where homosexuality is the norm, and it caricatures the hyper-morality seen in the "social guidance" films.

Mary lives in a typical suburban neighbourhood where heterosexuals are seen as outcasts. When Brad, a new boy from San Francisco comes to town, Mary's straight feelings are confirmed. In a scene reminiscent of an after school special, Mary comes out to her mothers, whose reaction is seen in thought bubbles.

Done in a tongue-in-cheek manner, the film uses genuine phrases taken directly from an August 1998 *Newsweek* article on homosexuals who became heterosexuals. "Like alcoholism and kleptomania, heterosexuality is a disease," says the narrator of *Straight From The Suburbs*. In the end, although "science has discovered that through shock, medication and prayers, people like Brad and Mary can be treated," Mary moves on to a polygamist relationship with another couple and Brad moves onto Venus and everyone lives happily ever after.

To obtain a copy of either of these films, contact Marais at 845-2821

Marketing Monet

by Gabe Flores

The Montréal Museum of Fine Arts' latest exhibit, entitled "Monet at Giverny: Masterpieces from the Musée Marmottan," capitalizes on the cruel and drab Montreal winter by presenting twenty-two lively portraits by one of the fathers of Impressionism, Claude Monet. Billed as "the major cultural event of the winter," this exhibit features a hodge-podge of works from the latter 26 years of Monet's life at his Giverny estate. What can at best be described as a "sampling" of Monet's art, few of the works on display truly capture the artist's genius.

Unfortunately, the Montréal Monet exhibit is dwarfed by the highly acclaimed Monet exhibit presently showing at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. With barely a quarter of the paintings, the MMFA ingeniously uses an introductory gallery and a leaving gallery to disguise the sparse number of works on display. In the introductory, several architectural plans of the Giverny estate along with Monet's early work as a caricaturist set the stage for the exhibit.

Beginning in reverse chronological order, the first works show a Monet that left portions of the canvas untouched, either to draw attention towards the solitude of the central subject, in the case of *Iris* or to accentuate the sponta-

neity of portrait. Likewise, the somewhat undefined borders of *The Roses* could be a reflection of Monet's complacency towards the end of his prolific career, or

also consistent with all great artists. The progression from the objective reality characterized by such works as *The Red Boat* (1875) to the stunning work of abstraction of *Weeping Willow* (1921-1922)

is Monet's legacy. Works from the late 1800s, which were exhibited in the Paris shows were highly re-worked in the studio, often thick with paint. By contrast, in those works towards the end of his career seen here, Monet gained the experience and maturity to paint less from what he saw, for he was increasingly blind with old age, and more

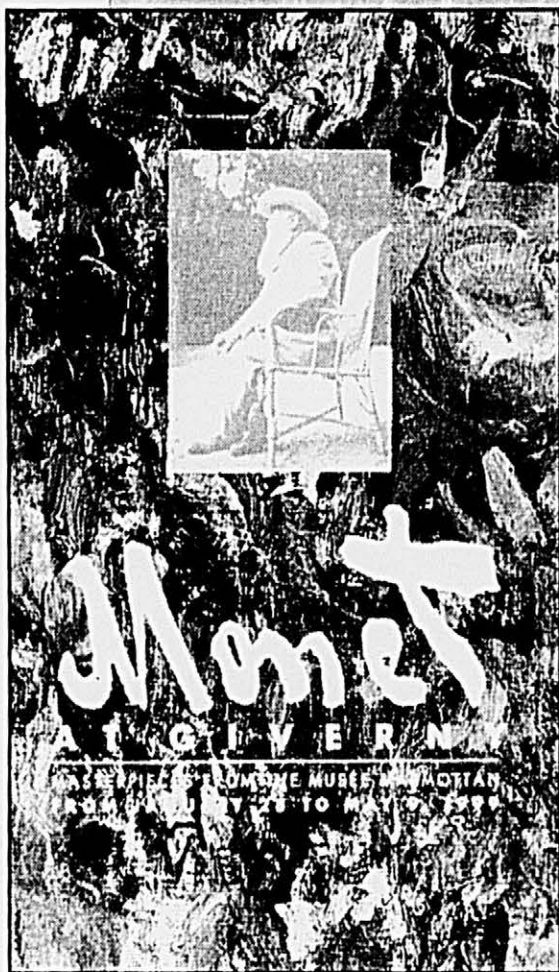
from what he remembered. Monet's *Water Lilies* are perhaps his most famous series of paintings, and a subject to which he returned from both inspiration and challenge. While none of the huge canvases of *Water Lilies* seen at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris are part of this collection, the half-dozen on display offer a glimpse of genius. The calm diffusion of pastel colours; the combination of the cobalt blue and the vermillion yellow, in addition to the complexity of capturing the delicately floating water lilies on the pond is nothing short of masterful. Incorporating the reflections off the water with the same attention to detail seen in the *Poplars* series, Monet explored the various dimensions of *Water Lilies*. Working at his convenience in the Giverny garden, Monet approached his subjects from different angles, with varying light conditions, and in all seasons. With the luxury of maintaining an immaculate garden and pond, Monet saw both the advantage and practicality of practicing his other love in life; landscaping.

Aside from the brisk business of selling 40,000 tickets to the exhibit in advance, and numerous sponsorships ranging from the Montréal Casino to Air Transat and corporate powerhouse American Express, the MMFA is merchandising Monet's work to excess. The artist himself would be rolling in his grave were he to

know that a perfume alongside gardening tools are now bearing his name. However, the merchandising trend began long before this exhibit. Museums worldwide have tapped the lucrative market by offering every conceivable trinket, stopping short of carpets or even worse, toilet paper.

These symptoms are signs of a larger problem. The arts, both visual and performing, have become an increasingly easy target for government cuts and coupled with legislation banning tobacco sponsorships to various events, such institutions are forced to exploit different options. However, to the MMFA's credit, they have not resorted to tobacco sponsorships for their exhibits.

The aggressive marketing campaign by the MMFA coupled with the widespread appeal of Impressionist art will translate into crowded galleries at the museum. However, the Monet aficionado will come away unfulfilled from this minor exhibit. Due in large part to what the Musée Marmottan could lend out of their collection, and a large number of Monet works in private hands, the exhibit is stretched thin. With barely enough material for a cohesive theme, and only a handful of truly exceptional works, this exhibit has been given a disproportionately large amount of attention.



most probably, as a result of failing eyesight.

However, such technique is

from what he remembered.

Monet's *Water Lilies* are perhaps his most famous series of

Mutant Species of Art

FIGUREHEAD PROVES THAT THE WRITING SCENE IS TWICE AS FAST

by Helen

Polychronakos

Someone once tried to convince Principal Shapiro that poetry is the latest craze among pharmaceutical companies. I don't think he bought it. As a result, aside from a recently instituted poetry writing course, our great Harvard of the North offers little official support for those who lean towards the creative side of things. But who really wants to entrust imagination to the drab walls of the institution?

The proliferation of student-run journals at McGill is a sure sign that our writing scene is alive and kicking. And the latest incarnation of this free-spirited creativity is *FigureHead Productions*, a new reading series coordinated by four McGill students and recent graduates. *FigureHead* has al-

ready extended its fledging wings far beyond our ivy-covered (but still drab) walls. Its first two readings featured Montréal's Faizal Deen, as well as Ashok Mathur from Calgary and Camille Roy from San Francisco.

FigureHead's next production promises to level walls of all sorts. Brought to you from De-

troit, Carla Harryman's fame has traveled far and wide. She has received several grants (such as the National Endowment for the Arts), and her work

has wound its way into the pages of the *Norton Anthology of American Postmodern Poetry*.

However, Harryman's art crosses more than geographic borders. Though currently com-

experimental theatre and opera. Even on the literary scene, she prefers to go under the heading "performative reader."

Accompanying Harryman will be Montréal's Anne Stone, reading from her latest book, *jacks: a gothic gospel* (DC Books, 1998). On the local scene, Stone has become infamous for her performative skills: rumor has it that she once threw a raw egg at heckling passersby. For Anne Stone, the written and the performative go hand and hand in order to offer audiences a mutant species of art.

Carla Harryman and Anne Stone will be performing Sunday, February 7, 1999 at 8:30 pm at Fauch Le Vent, 101 Fairmount West.

four dollars

8:30 pm Sunday, February 7th

Fauche-le-vent (101, ave. Fairmount ouest)

ANNE STONE
AND **CARLA HARRYMAN**

Her ten books, whose genres encompass poetry, prose, and drama, have been translated into French, Spanish, and German.

pleting a novel, *Gardener of Stars* (forthcoming, Atelos Press), Harryman is hardly just a writer. She has worked as a director, performer, and collaborator in

thursday culture meetings 1:00 in shatner b-03 be there. wooo.

(continued from page 4)

US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, however, has said that taking the issue back to the WTO would be like litigating the same case twice. She warned that the administration will aggressively pursue Canadian policies that hamper US magazine publishers, as well as "other media and entertainment industries."

US trade officials are meeting with their Canadian counterparts in Ottawa this week in an attempt to resolve the dispute, but given the positions of both sides, a compromise seems unlikely.

There is much more at stake in this dispute than pure economic considerations. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, in regard to the dispute, said that protecting our cultural industries is, "part of the national identity." Cultural industries provide a forum for Canadians to discuss and influence the direction of their country in artistic, political, and economic matters. They have a value well beyond the economic activity they represent.

On the American side, this dispute represents an important precedent. The entertainment/media industry has become one of the most important and lucrative industries in the US, and its position continues to grow. This industry is one of the US's most important exports, and many other countries besides Canada are concerned with protecting their domestic cultural industries.

This will certainly be an issue brought up in the next round of global free-trade talks expected late this year in Seattle. Since Canada is the US's closest trading partner, the way in which trade agreements function and are enforced between the two countries provide important precedents for US trade relations with other countries. Successful Canadian cultural protection would serve as a model that could be followed by others.

This fear of a precedent for cultural protection would perhaps explain the severity of the trade sanctions threatened by the US. The threatened \$3 billion to \$4

billion worth of sanctions would be targeted against Canadian exporters of steel, wood, plastics, clothing and textiles, and would be worth roughly seven times the Canadian advertising market in dispute, valued at \$575-million a year.

There is apparent resolve of the Canadian government on this issue, despite the objections of companies targeted for sanctions who fear they will be caught in the middle of a trade dispute they have nothing to do with. This means that Bill C-55 will pass the final reading in the House of Commons sometime next week. However, this does not necessarily mean that it will be enforced.

Last summer Heritage Minister Sheila Copps, architect of Bill C-55, hosted a meeting of ministers responsible for culture from twenty-two countries, excluding the US. The objective of this International Meeting on Cultural Policy, according to Copps, was to provide, "a unique opportunity for countries to discuss the importance of sustaining local and national cul-

tures in an increasingly globalized and digitized world." By hosting this meeting Canada assumed an important leadership position in the international arena with regards to protect-

ing national cultures. If the government sticks to its guns with regard to C-55, it may truly be worthy of this role.

With files from The Globe and Mail

(continued from page 5)

Other topics that will be discussed in the course include nationalism and colonialism from a feminist perspective, sexual and queer geographies, and the relationships between gender, race and class in structuring geographies of difference.

The class consists of about twenty students, the majority of whom are in Women's Studies. Many learned of the course by word of mouth or by posters and announcements throughout the Geography department. Its small class size made for an interactive environment, maintained through weekly discussions and student presentations. Much emphasis is placed on participation, which makes

up 20% of the students' final grade.

I sat in on one class, in which Podmore introduced "The Gender of Landscapes". This topic examined the observation of landscapes from a variety of perspectives, including the feminist one. The discussions on articles concerning this area of study exemplified the multidisciplinary aspect of feminist geography.

Woman's Studies is a rapidly expanding field, though it is yet to be recognized as a department at McGill. It is the initiative of those like Podmore who bring us one step closer to a more broad-based education, where there are alternatives to traditionally narrow fields of study.

Rendez-Vous...

QUEBEC'S ANNUAL FILM SHOWCASE

by Alain Pierre-Antoine

Every year the Québécois film community holds a showcase of its annual film and video productions, *Les Rendez-vous*. This year, its 17th edition is being held from February 11th to the 17th at the Cinémathèque québécoise and at the National Film Board. It will also be traveling to Quebec City (Feb. 23rd to the 28th), Winnipeg (Feb. 26th to the 28th), Vancouver (March 2nd to the 7th) and finally to Hull (March 10th to the 12th).

Les Rendez-vous usually features a number of activities that pay tribute to seasoned film and video makers, individual and collective alike in the form of retrospectives spanning decades, video installations and photo exhibitions.

On Sunday February 14th, a

trilogy of Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's films will be shown: *Il ne faut pas mourir pour ça* (1967) *Le Vieux Pays où Rimbaud est mort* (1977) and *Aujourd'hui ou jamais* (1998). Lefebvre is one of the modern Québécois film pioneers. He began his cinematic work in 1963 and to this day is one of the most prolific directors.

If you've heard of Abitibi poet Richard Desjardins, you may know he also delved into filmmaking, with partner Robert Monderie. Their entire production (actually three films) will be shown on Feb. 13th at the NFB. Their work is a socially conscious outlook informed by a critique of the economic model of development in the western part of the province, and of the ecological catastrophe stemming from it.

If you're interested in the flexibility and financial accessibility of video, look out for *Focus sur la Coop Vidéo*, *Hommages à Vidéo* femmes and *Femmes à travers les âges de la vidéo*.

There are also two photo exhibitions coming up: *Réflexions* and *Impressions*. *Réflexions*, will be showing at la Maison de la culture Frontenac from Feb. 4th to the 24th is made up of pictures by set photographer Vero Boncompagni who chose to let his models (actors and actresses) decide the site and staging of the photographs; self-portraits somewhat akin to four-handed little piano pieces. *Impressions* will be showing at the Cinémathèque québécoise in the Foyer Lucie Guilbault from Feb. 2nd to March the 28th. As well one could check out *Le cinéma québécois*

s'affiche at salle Normand McLaren of the Cinémathèque québécoise from Feb. 10th to May 30th, consisting of québécois film posters.

Since this is an annual retrospective, here's your chance to catch the most talked about films of the year: Manond Briand's *2 secondes*, *Les boys II*, Denise Filiatrault's *C'est à ton tour Laura*, *Cadieux*, Charles Binamé's *Le coeur au poing*, *Les enfants de Refus global*, Gilles Carle's *Moi j'me fais mon cinéma*, Robert Lepage's *Nô*, Denis Villeneuve's *Un 32 août sur Terre* and Francois Girard's *Le Violon rouge*.

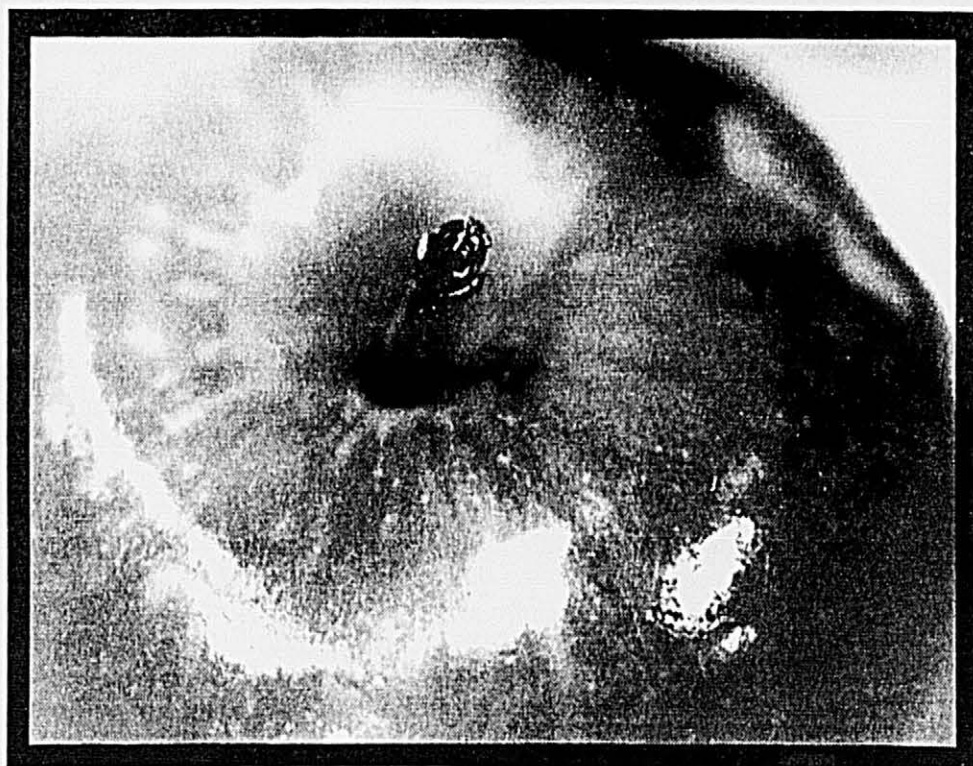
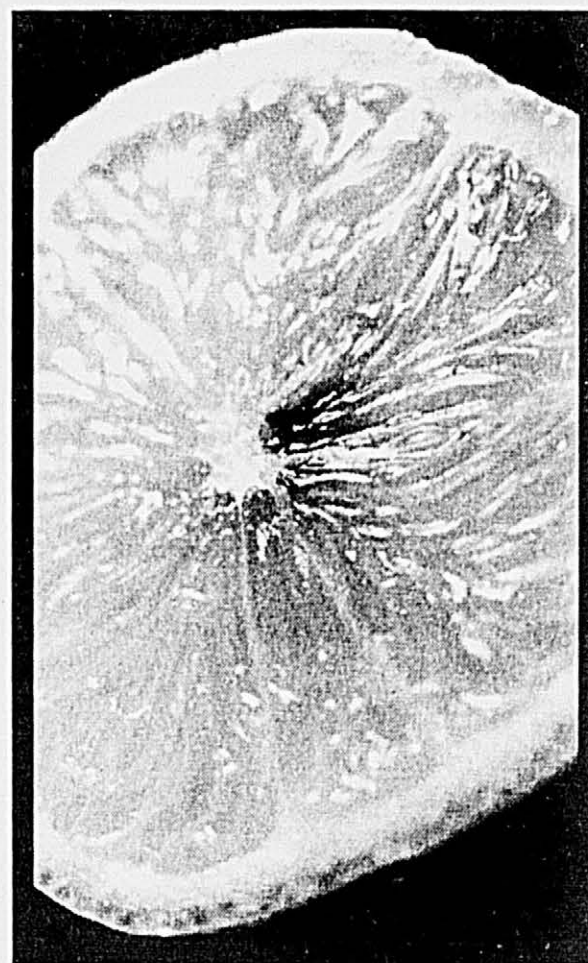
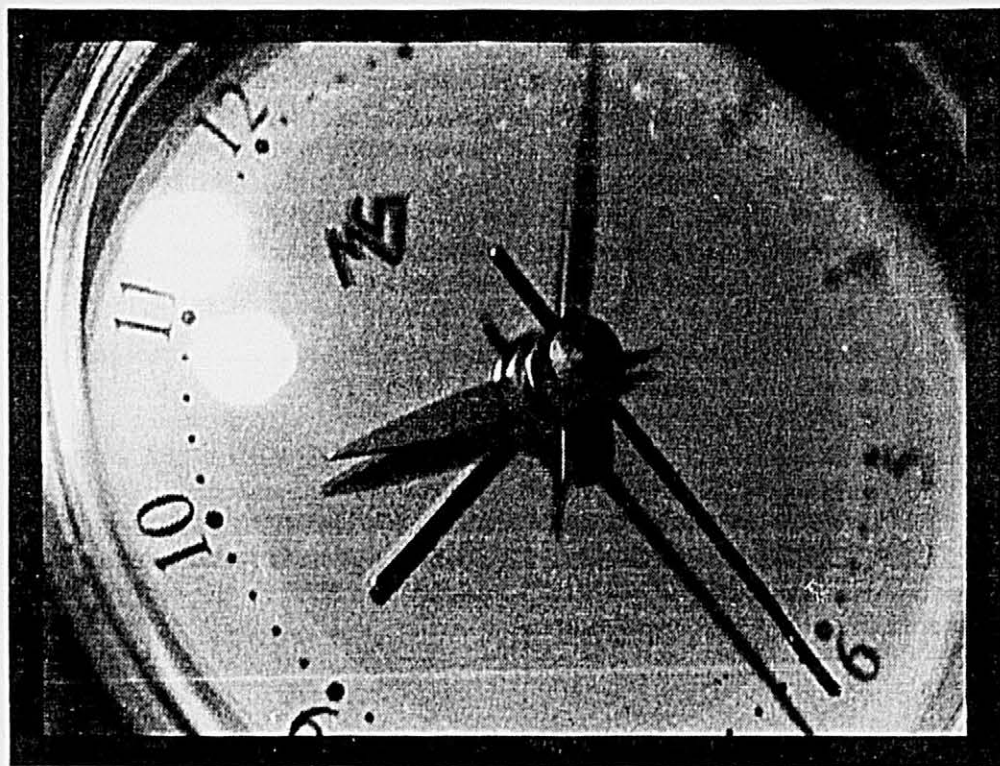
If you're into smaller films with a social content or documentaries, try and see: *11 septembre 1973: le dernier combat de Sal-*

vador Allende, *Carnets d'un black en Ayiti* about québécois-haitian poet Stanley Pean, *Dans la gueule du crocodile* about Port-au-Prince mayor Manno Charlemagne, *Erreur boréale* about deforestation in Abitibi by poet and singer Richard Desjardins, *Etrange histoire* on deceased poet Gilbert Langevin, *Les mots magiques* by Jean-Marc Vallée (of *Liste noire* fame) and *Au revoir Julie* by Michka Saïl.

Tickets are \$5 and the screenings are held at the Cinémathèque québécoise, 535 boul. Maisonneuve est (tel.: 842-9768) and at the Cinéma ONF/NFB at 1564 rue St-Denis (tel.: 496-6895) starting Feb. 12th 1998. Programs are free and you can get them at the addresses above.

Bits of my Kitchen

by céline heinbecker



**WE WANT YOUR
PHOTO ESSAYS.** stop
by the office and chat
with céline to let your
creative juices flow.

due to the lack of submissions, creative space will return next week. submit.
poetry. artwork. whatever. please. pete's box. shatner. b-03. please.

Thursday, Feb. 4

Peer Health Education will be facilitating a Body Image Workshop at 6:30 pm for women and men at Royal Victoria College in the West lounge. All are welcome. For info contact Julie at 931-3206.

Film and debate on Nelson Mandela for Black History month. Hosted by journalist Michaelle Jean. Special guests: Mr. Aziz Salmons Fall, Mr. Norman Cook. Université de Montréal, Amphitheatre Jean Lesage, 3200 rue Jean-Brillan. Free.

Friday Feb. 5

Forget Tonto. Come join the Talking Circle. The Native Students' Association of McGill Hosts a Bi-weekly series of Discussion Group Sessions, "Opening up a dialogue". The focus is on social, political and economic issues with which Native peoples grapple today. In Shatner from 3:30 pm to 5pm in rm 425. All are welcome.

Fearless Friday Food Feast for Body Image & Eating Disorders awareness week. Shatner 107/108, 12:30-3:30. Donations welcome. Proceeds will go towards funding Body Image Forum 1999.

For info call 398-2915 or 931-3206.

Saturday Feb. 6

Activist School 1999 at UQAM. Get to know your fellow QPIRGers and energize yourself for a coming century of activism. Cost: \$8 includes vegetarian meals. Register in person or over phone. QPIRG-McGill is at 3647 University ave., 3rd floor. 398-7432.

Monday Feb. 8

"Stock Market Riot" a photo exhibit by Justyna Latek and Thomas Lavier on money, chaos and the stock market opens and will be on until Feb. 12. In the Art History Dept., Arts building West, top floor. The vernissage, wine and cheese will be at 6 pm. For info: Havie@po-box.mcgill.ca

Wednesday Feb. 10

Le Frigo Vert, a non-profit natural foods store funded and directed by the students of Concordia University, announces the official launch of its vegetarian cookbook. Written for students, people on a

EVENTS

low income budget, and individuals without a lot of time to cook, the cookbook offers practical tips, information, and recipes on vegetarian eating and living. The cookbook retails for \$5 dollars. The launch will be from 5 pm to 6:30 at Le Frigo Vert, 2130 Mackay. Yummie munchies and sample recipes from the cookbook will be served. For info call 848-7586.

Volunteer

The tutoring program initiated by Jewish Family Services of the Baron de Hirsch Institute needs volunteer tutors to work with individual children, primarily at the elementary level, either in Hebrew, French or English after school hours. Volunteers can make a commitment of only an hour per week until the end of the school year. Call 342-0000 local 227.

Learn great employment skills! Volunteer to be a member of Le

Frigo Vert's Board of Directors. The board is responsible for the policy, programming, vision and long-term stability of the organization. Board members gain useful skills in administration, management, program evaluation, human resources, and non-profit organizations. The time commitment is five hours a week. Positions are available as of early spring 1999, for a minimum of six months. For info call 848-7586

Spend one hour a week with an elderly from your community and see what a difference you can make. Call us at: C.R.A.I.C., Elizabeth or Lorena at 273-6588.

Contactivity Centre, a Westmount non-profit community organizations for seniors needs volunteers to: spend an hour a week visiting with frail seniors in the home, or to do weekly grocery shopping for a senior lady who has trouble walking. All in the Westmount area. Contact Lisa for details at 932-2326.

Like to shop? So do many frail elderly in the Cote St. Luc area who need a hand. If you have access to a car and a couple of hours a week to share, you could be a SHOPPING MATE for the CLSC Rene-Cassin. Go ahead, make their day! For an interview call 488-9163 local 351.

Ongoing

Montage, a McGill literary publication is accepting poetry, prose and photography submissions. The 98-99 them is The Road. Prose and photography submission deadline is Feb. 8th. Contact Meredith 844-1278 or Taraneh 484-6876 for info.

McGill Center for Loss and Bereavement is offering support groups free of charge for anyone who is experiencing the loss of a family member or friend. For information, please call 398-7067.

Post-abortion support group. Small open discussion group in a comfortable environment to talk, listen, and receive support from others who have had a similar experience. Meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. 8:30 pm. Room 423 in Shatner.

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.75 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.25 per day. General Public: \$6.00 per day, or \$5.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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Resumé Experience

\$12.85 to start pt now, ft available this summer. Excellent comm. skills req'd; no formal exp nec. 733-2686 for interview now.

Tutor in Pagemaker 6. Wanted for private course. \$15/hr. eve: 262-2328.

Summer Camp Jobs, Laurentians: Swim, Sail, Windsurf, Waterski, Canoe, Gymnastics, Tennis, Basketball, Football, Wall Climbing, Archery, Hockey, Baseball, Arts & Crafts, Pottery, Beadmaking, Photography, Drama Director, Jazz Instructors. E-mail resume ronnieb@generation.net or fax (514) 481-7863

\$300 half-day. Female models 18-23 y/o, cute, slim, nice smile for erotic photography. No experience needed. All origins welcome. Bring a friend, make \$\$\$ 998-8255.

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Daily Publications Society Special General Meeting (SGM)

Monday, February 15, 1999

4:30 pm

The Student Center
3480 McTavish
(room 310)

The Election of Directors to the
Daily Publications Society 1999-2000 Board of
Directors will take place at the SGM

Nominations open February 1
Nominations close February 10

Nomination Kits will be available at The McGill Daily Office,
Room B07 until February 10th.

Candidates will be announced between February 10 and February 15.

For further information, kindly contact
David Goldfarb Chief Returning Officer (CRO)
Daily Publications Society, at 398-6790 or 398-6784

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